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Haliburton Highlands Secondary School Grade 12 graduate Ben Gill receives his diploma from principal Jennifer Mills at the ceremony on Thursday, June 27. See more photos on page 9. /TIM YANO Special to the *Echo*

# County tweaks physician recruitment incentives

JAMES MATTHEWS
*Staff Reporter*

Haliburton County has refined some aspects of what will be used to lure physicians to practice in the area.

The recruitment program initially had a $15,000 for a relocation incentive. Scott Ovell, the county's economic development director, told council when it met June 26 that aspect has been better defined.

Now it stipulates that the incentive is to help with relocation to the physician's permanent residence within Haliburton County, he said.

"We actually have seen increased activity in enquiries from physicians since we last presented this in May, which is quite interesting," Ovell said. "I'm getting a lot of people asking us about it."

He said it's accepted that there will be different requests from physicians over time that may be beyond the scope of the recruitment policy.

There are four physicians accessing the county's incentive program. Staff are not requesting additional funding for the program. The balance of the physician recruitment reserve is $185,906.

Ovell gave council some recommendations for amendments to the policy.

First of all, he suggested the Doctor

see COUNTY page 2

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# Recruiters pitch alliance to draw foreign physicians

JAMES MATTHEWS
*Staff Reporter*

Eastern Ontario physician recruiters are banding together to lure doctors to the region.

Representatives of 13 regions have been asked to join the collaborative team, said Wendy Welch, Haliburton County's physician recruitment coordinator.

An alliance of recruiters was formed almost a year ago to draw physicians to southern Ontario. It is by that model that the eastern Ontario group is trying to get off the ground.

"Not all regions have decided to participate in this," she told county council during its June 26 meeting. "At this time, some regions are saying they'll join for this year and then reassess and decide if they want to come back next year."

Of the pool of 13 potential members, Welch said it looks like eight or 10 have gotten on board.

The Southern ON Physician Recruitment Alliance (SOPRA) has proven to be a successful collaboration. The Eastern ON Physician Recruitment Alliance (EOPRA) hopes to build on that success.

Welch said the goal of the partnership will be to pool resources and put smaller communities on the radar of international prospects who want to relocate to Ontario, while remaining affordable for our respective recruitment programs.

"It is with the experience and leadership and guidance from that team that we've decided to come together and form an alliance for this region as well," Welch said.

For the remainder of 2024, the county can join the partnership for $500, to be covered by the existing physician recruitment budget. There will in future years be an annual fee of $5,000 if the county chooses to remain a member.

In a report to council, staff recommended joining for the remainder of this year. Recruitment leads generated by way of the partnership could be tracked. If the alliance is deemed successful, the cost to continue with the partnership may be considered for the 2025 budget.

"A lot of physicians that are coming, let's say, from the U.K. that are looking at immigrating or relocating here know they want to come to Ontario or they know they want to go to B.C.," Welch said. "They haven't zoned in on a region and they don't have any idea where to go.

"This (alliance) helps us get more representation at more international events."

EOPRA will increase awareness of practice opportunities in eastern Ontario through collaborative marketing material and sharing recruitment event costs.

Participants will share leads through a customer relationship management (CRM) platform to fill jobs faster and more efficiently across Ontario Health East.

The collaboration will enable standardize key performance indicators for international physician recruitment and the creation of standardized recruitment information.

"It's not meant to be competitive," Welch said. "I know we keep saying it's such a competitive environment, but it's (the alliance) meant to share these contacts and share these candidates."

"Anything that can expand the reach and we can't be everywhere," said Councillor Bob Carter, the mayor of Minden Hills. "We're not going to be flying to the U.K. and then to Australia or wherever. I think it's worth trying out to see what the potential would be."

"I too see the benefits of trying it out," said Warden Liz Danielsen, Algonquin Highlands' mayor.

# County considers doctor signing bonus

**from page 1**

Recruitment Guidelines become an actual policy.

The return to service minimum requirement should be changed from four years to two years. The policy should allow for flexibility in funding with no change to the total amount.

If a doctor enters into an agreement for three years, the total amount of funding allocation of $75,000 could be paid out in different amounts as opposed to the current structure of $25,000 per year. With the change, the county could pay out $50,000.00 in Year One, no funding in Year Two and $25,000 in Year Three.

And the recruitment program should be opened up to allow the $15,000 relocation reimbursement incentive to be accessed by medical students.

The county's Physician Recruitment Coordinator will also report to council on a quarterly basis to better provide updates of recruitment efforts.

Warden Liz Danielsen, the mayor of Algonquin Highlands, asked for council's thoughts in whether or not the county should offer physicians a monetary signing bonus. There's serious competition for doctors and such an incentive might be a good idea.

"I understand that there are other municipalities that do offer a signing bonus, but they may not offer this yearly incentive to go along with it," she said. "I'm not sure if any of them offer both."

Another avenue to address the region's physician needs might be to open the recruitment effort to nurse practitioners.

"Nurse practitioners are taking a much stronger role across the province and country," Danielsen said.

"I think that is a possibility of attracting some other health care workers," said Councillor Murray Fearrey, Dysart's mayor.

Coun. Cecil Ryall, Highlands East's deputy mayor, suggested the program be extended to nurse practitioners. They have authority to make referrals to doctors and to do many of a physicians duties that would lessen the workload.

"They play such an important role and they're certainly needed," said Deputy Warden Dave Burton, Highlands East's mayor.

Coun. Lisa Schell, the deputy mayor of Minden Hills, said Haliburton County is the best place in the world to live, but it's important to be competitive with other regions who are also trying to meet their healthcare needs.

"The signing bonus, I think we'd have to look at what other people are doing," said Coun. Bob Carter, the mayor of Minden Hills. "We have a relatively generous six-year policy, so I'm not really certain what the addition of the signing bonus would do."

He said the county lacks an integrated program of how physicians and nurse practitioners are working together. As such, the county should investigate a model to illustrate the whole family health team working together.

"I would recommend against doing it at this point and let us see how we do with the physician recruitment," he said.

"I think we can move forward with the policy that's been brought forward to us today but ask for a little bit more consideration to see what specifically we might want to offer to nurse practitioners at this point in time," Danielsen said.

"I'm sure everybody would like to see some comparables for similar sized counties, towns as to what they're actually offering financially," Schell said.

"We're happy to do more research and return to council," Ovell said.

Coun. Walt McKechnie, Dysart's deputy mayor, said healthcare has gone downhill Canada-wide. Staff at every level of the healthcare system should be given tax breaks, he said.

"The amount of money that the federal government, as far as I'm concerned, wastes, the amount of money the provincial government wastes, why couldn't they put some of that money they waste into the whole healthcare system, starting with the doctors and nurses and everybody involved?" McKechnie said.

It's time the levels of government with the power to effect real change takes a look at health care in Canada, he said.

"Our healthcare system needs a boost," he said. "They need to get in the game here and quit wasting our money on stupid things."

"I think you'll probably find some agreement in the room with that particular sentiment," Danielsen said.

# Point in Time seeks space to accommodate expansion

VIVIAN COLLINGS
*Editor*

The Youth Wellness Hub in Haliburton has proven to be an essential service offered to the community by Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth and Parents since it opened in 2020.

With nearly 2,000 visits in the last year for wellbeing activities and 232 youth accessing the Hub's formal services, it's time for a new space.

"I think it's a great thing that we have a model that works and a way to reach people. The hard part of it is that the lack of space is presenting a barrier for some youth to utilize the Youth Hub. We're looking to build synergies and efficiencies with both staffing and infrastructure by co-locating under one roof," said Marg Cox, executive director of Point in Time.

Point in Time currently has a main office on Eastern Ave. in Haliburton about a kilometre away from the Hub on Dysart Ave.

The not-for-profit organization hopes to consolidate all of their services.

"Being in separate locations definitely makes everything trickier when we're trying to operate as one organization," Cox said.

When it first opened in 2020, it was a brand new project, and Point in Time didn't know how it would be received.

"When we purchased that building, it was a pilot project. The pilot contained enough space for three staff. We're currently at seven staff members and need more space for all of them to be able to accommodate the youth they're supporting," Cox explained.

The Haliburton County Youth Wellness Hub has served nearly 2,000 youth in the past year. Point in Time is seeking space to expand the Hub and their offices. /Photo submitted

Youth have always had a say in what they dreamed the Hub would be.

"The interesting thing about the model is that the youth early on said they wanted it to be a go-to place to meet friends and do wellness activities. But, they also knew youth needed more access to formal services. What we're finding through our data is that they were exactly right. Youth are coming in for the activities, but also seeking services while they're here."

Cox said without a welcoming space, it can be hard to reach out when individuals need extra support.

"It can often take quite a lot of courage to seek support. For us, it has to be in the same building so they have a chance to meet the staff during snack time, drop ins, so that they can build that sense of safety and trust."

The Youth Hub offers mental health support, substance use support, primary care, sexual health, 2SLBGTIA+ support, care coordination, single session counselling, peer support, employment support (IPS) and the Lift Program, housing support, drop-ins, recreational activities such as community outings, D&D group, workshops, Indigenous peer navigation and outreach, Mobile Share and Care outreach, and support and resources like food, laundry money, hygiene products, and more.

Point in Time has been working with COS Consulting to outline the Youth Hub's needs as well as the needs of the organization.

"Youth have also had an input on what they think are important elements of design for a new space," she said.

Cox said the location must stay within Haliburton to be in close proximity to Haliburton Highlands Secondary School.

"A lot of youth walk after school. We want to make sure it stays accessible to them."

Cox said they will always continue to maintain a satellite office in Minden.

"Some youth are noise sensitive, neurodiverse, or introverted, and the main room in the Wellness Hub gets very busy and noisy when lots of people are there at once. We want to make sure we have space and time to think on their own."

"We hope that there's a way we can potentially be creative in our design of the space so that it's a welcoming place for both youth and families."

Cox said Point in Time is also looking into creating spaces for collaboration with other organizations.

"Ideally this will happen as soon as possible. There are three pillars to this project. One is securing the funding. Two is finding the site. And three is the partnership process to bring it all together."

To donate to Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth and Parents and the Youth Wellness Hub, visit pointintime.ca.

To learn more about how you can help, contact 705-457-5345 or email info@pointintime.ca.

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# Collaboration in technology brings savings: consultant

JAMES MATTHEWS

*Staff Reporter*

Effective utilization of technology is a required core competency for municipal governments.

And Haliburton County has a strategy to more effectively take advantage of technology. Ben Perry of Perry Group Consulting walked county council through an IT digital strategy when it met June 26.

There's an expectation that residents, customers, and businesses should be able to interact with their government more effectively online, he said.

"What we see is technology driving efficiency and productivity benefits," Perry said. "We think there's some really important drivers for using technology. We also think there's some risks if we don't.

"(Such as) becoming an out-of-touch government that doesn't deliver services in a way that customers expect to interact."

Cybersecurity risks have become more dire in recent years.

Moving services to an online format can lower service delivery costs, he said. Many municipal studies suggest face-to-face transactions cost organizations between $15 and $30. A phone-based transaction costs about $5. But an online transaction costs only about $1, he said.

"We're not suggesting that all service go online and the organization becomes faceless," Perry said. "We need to continue to support all of the channels and support all of the ways our customers and residents want to interact with us."

He said the county has a strong IT team that effectively delivers services to all partners. The county and its lower tier municipalities have a successful partnership in technology management.

The IT strategy sets a number of directions, Perry said.

It has the county's IT team and its director playing a greater role in coordinating increased collaboration around business solutions, GIS and data, and web spaces.

The IT team will expand on bring business solutions, GIS and data expertise and capacity to support joint working.

The strategy calls on each municipality to have a local Digital Transformation Coordinator and to establish a collaborative governance model to bring people together to oversee the implementation of the strategy.

It's also paramount to establish a collaboration-first approach toward new and emerging technology opportunities.

"The collaborative working in the technology space is already delivering real value," he said. "You're tackling projects that you couldn't tackle individually. By working together, you're achieving savings."

Mike March, the county's information technology director, said he doesn't expect council to straight away endorse everything in the strategy.

"There's a lot of information here," March said. "More stuff needs to be fleshed out. More information needs to be brought forward."

What he does ask is that council at least endorse the strategy's principles.

"Basically, that there are intrinsic benefits that can be realized if we all come together, work together on some of these projects," he said.

Warden Liz Danielsen, the mayor of Algonquin Highlands, said she's long believed in the benefits of streamlining things, shaving costs, and working together when possible.

"And this is the perfect example of something that can help us all in moving in that direction and making life easier and hopefully less expensive for all of our taxpayers," she said.

# School board sets spending priorities

JAMES MATTHEWS

*Staff Reporter*

The Trillium Lakelands District School Board approved its spending plan for the coming school year.

The board gave the OK for the 2024-25 school year budget during the June 11 public meeting. The group earmarked $264.8 million in expenditures.

School board trustees were presented with a breakdown of the financial amounts within the new Core Education Funds from the Ministry of Education. That funding is broken out into six areas, including classroom staffing, learning resources, special education, school facilities, student transportation, and school board administration.

Wes Hahn, the director of education, said TLDSB is committed to a future where students not only develop their competencies but thrive in their environment.

He said it is important to the school board that the system continues to grow student knowledge, self-confidence, and resiliency. These are key factors in leading a healthy, successful, and fulfilling life, he said.

"As a system, a balanced budget is an essential component to operate effectively while meeting the two goals of student achievement and student and staff well-being within the TLDSB 2022-2027 Strategic Plan," Hahn said.

"I am incredibly proud of the work of the Finance Services team, superintendents, and trustees who have kept the work of the strategic direction in focus while completely redesigning this new budget."

Tim Ellis, the board's business services superintendent, said the budget continues the momentum garnered through student achievement over recent years.

"Classroom teaching staff adjustments within the budget reflect the anticipated changes in enrolment at each school," Ellis said.

> ***I am incredibly proud of the work of the Finance Services team, superintendents, and trustees who have kept the work of the strategic direction in focus while completely redesigning this new budget.***
>
> — Wes Hahn, TLDSB director of education

Attendees of the first Music in the Park of 2024 hosted by Haliburton Rotary braved the weather to listen to Suzie Vinnick on Tuesday, June 25. Vinnick was joined by friend and fellow musician Nick Russell for a few songs. /Submitted

# HHHS AGM reviews 2023-2024's biggest changes

THOMAS SMITH

*Staff Reporter*

Haliburton Highland Health Services has overcome adversity this past year. Despite frequent challenges, the HHHS has implemented new programs, hired 80 new staff members, community support services, and had a total of 20,000 volunteer service hours logged.

Due to the Ontario Not–for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) that was proclaimed on Oct. 19, 2021 nonprofits must comply by Oct. 19, 2024. A new prototype by-law Corporate By-Law 2024-1 was passed. Another special resolution was that the number of Directors on the Board for the HHHS Board of Directors shall be fixed at eighteen and that "the Members empower the Directors to fix the number of Directors by resolution of the Directors from time to time." The Professional Staff By-Law 2024-1 was also confirmed as a by-law. The details of these by-laws can be found at the HHHS website www.hhhs.ca.

One audience member asked about the balance of directors across the four municipalities

"What happens with the nominating committee is we advertise three times in the newspaper, and we look for three candidates who are interested in joining the board. We do, definitely. When we receive all of the applications, we look at what skills they have to fill holes and where they live. We did not refuse any applicants this time. It is something we try to do and I will say this year, we actually had some supporting individuals reach out in Minden to drum up more applicants and extended our period for receiving applications in order to allow the individuals from Minden to join the board," said Irene Odell, board chair and treasurer of HHHS. Mayors Liz Danielsen and Murrary Fearrey have joined as HHHS Board of Directors.

An audit from BDO Canada was conducted as well. As independent auditors, their job was to provide opinion on finances, perform risk assessment, internal control, and analytical procedures and amounts.

> ***"This year HHHS has made significant improvement. Revenue increased by $3.8 million. Unfortunately, our expenses went up $1.9 million."***
>
> — Ulvi Ishkhagi–Bayat, CFO of HHHS

In the HHHS's Statement of Financial Position, the assets total including cash, investments, accounts receivable, inventories, prepaid expenses, investments, and capital assets totaled $27,649,245. The liabilities and net assets including bank indebtedness, Ontario Health advance, accounts payable and accrued liabilities, current portion of long-term debt, employee future benefits, deferred capital contributions, long-term debt, and asset retirement obligation totalled $33,202,641. This resulted in a total unrestricted net debt of $5,553,396.

"This year HHHS has made significant improvement, revenue increased by $3.8 million. Unfortunately our expenses went up $1.9 million," said Ulvi Ishkhagi-Bayat, CFO of HHHS.

"Olvey is providing information he can provide today. We will be here tomorrow, assured Odell. "Ontario hospital funding is challenging, we are not the only organization facing those challenges."

When the government repealed bill 124 received funding to cover the bill. However, only 85 per cent of the funding has been received.

Funds from the sale of locations were moved to the CT scanner project, which was approved by both boards.

"The way forward is not by integration but by partnerships and increasing workflow," said Odell.

'Today we are better off, but still not in the clear. We still have work to do but know that we have taken many steps to serve those in the county."

Later, Odell stated that "closing the Minden ED mitigated the very high risk of both Haliburton and Minden ED being shut down at the same time with little to no notice, leaving the county without any emergency services. To be clear, if Haliburton ED closed, Minden would not have remained open."

Kawartha North Family Health team and ParaMed Health services are two companies that have teamed with HHHS to provide healthcare in the county. Services such as the Minden Urgent Care Clinic and Virtual Care Clinic operate at the site of the former Minden Hospital. The site is currently leased to Kawartha North Family Health team. These services have contributed to a 29 per cent decrease in ED visits from 2022/23 to 2023/24.

"Together we are providing healthcare services to more people in our county. Together, that number exceeds more than what we could have done with our two emergency departments," said Odell.

"We are at 146 per cent occupancy right now, that's a lot of people," said Victoria Nelson, CEO of HHHS.

The new CT scanner will be available for emergency cases 24/7 and times slots will be left open periodically throughout the day to allow emergency patients to be seen, promised Nelson.

For four months this summer, HHHS will bring in agency nurses to work to fill positions.

"Our aim is to get enough staff, so we don't need agency nurses," said Nelson.

"We hope to hear about our funding soon. Imagine that. Part way through the year and we still don't know what our funding is," said Nelson. "I'm expecting some relief from the Ministry and a good adjustment to our infrastructure problem that we have had for a number of years."

# *points of view*

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• 705-457-1037 • Fax 705-457-3275
Published by **White Pine Media Corp**

CANADIAN COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER AWARD 2018

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# Dream believer

*vivian collings*

**Editorial**

WE'RE ALL just ordinary people.

We have voices to speak and sing, bodies that can dance, hands that can build and write, ears for listening and learning, and feet that can take us anywhere in the world.

The extraordinary lies in what we decide to do with our special human features.

When we don't let fear and doubt stop us, extraordinary things happen.

I recently watched The Movie Man for the first time.

I'm late to the show, yes, but I was waiting to be able to see it at Highlands Cinemas itself.

The experience was surreal, sitting in 30-year-old velvet theatre seats while watching how they came to be there.

Keith Stata is not a man clouded by fear.

Born and raised in Kinmount, he didn't want to leave the town he knew and loved.

He worked in construction as a young man.

Films were in his soul, though.

He had big dreams.

Becoming a world-famous movie maker in a town of less than 500 people was, yes, maybe possible in some way, but unlikely.

He decided to reach out for an achievable, but equally as big dream.

If he couldn't make Hollywood films in Kinmount, he'd bring them there instead.

With his handy construction hands, he built a house for himself with a public 58-seat theatre inside in 1979.

After a few years, word spread that there was a place to watch new movies in the little town.

While thousands of small, independently-owned theatres in Canada and the US closed, Stata kept building.

Four more theatres were added on to the property.

He said to keep the lore of his little theatre in the woods alive, he had to think outside the box.

Stata went to hundreds of theatres that had closed to collect memorabilia.

Soon, every nook was filled with posters, movie projectors, mannequins, costumes, and trinkets.

Now, there's nothing else like it.

People arrived nightly by the hundreds.

For cottagers and visitors, it was a summer tradition to go to Highlands Cinemas with family.

For Haliburton County locals, it became the closest theatre left when the Molou in Haliburton and Beaver Theatre in Minden closed.

Blockbusters like Pirates of the Caribbean had cars lined up to the highway.

If the place wasn't special enough, Stata also takes care of 48 cats and counting that needed homes.

Again, with his construction background, he built pathways and homes for all of them.

They all get cans of Friskies food everyday and pets from Stata, except for Gumpy who hisses and spits.

It's an extraordinary place, build by a seemingly ordinary man with a big dream.

But, not without equal amounts of challenges and hardships.

The theatre closed for two years during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stata came close to selling his entire collection to be able to retire and provide for his cats.

It looked like the pandemic would put an end to the 40-year tradition.

But 75-year-old Stata was determined to keep it going while he was still there.

Times change, but we're lucky enough for this extraordinary piece of history to stay right in our backyard.

If you haven't been yet this season, get out there.

Visit highlandscinemas.com for movie times and to see how you can donate to Stata's cats.

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Two curious black bear cubs check out their surroundings. /By Tammy Nash

# What the rain brought

*Down Our road*

*sharon lynch*

JIM AND Monika were sitting on Jim's back deck enjoying a cup of coffee when it happened. One minute they were talking about the latest political scandal and the next they were running for cover. The skies had opened up and rain poured down as though trying to wash the two friends right off the planet.

Monika said she hadn't heard any predictions of this kind of weather. Jim's belief was that anyone who paid attention to the weather forecast was bound to be surprised or disappointed.

The skies had turned dark and turbulent, a strong wind had arrived turning the trees into waves of moving, shifting forms and Monika guessed the birds were huddled in the cedars.

Jim had always enjoyed a good rainstorm. When he was a youngster, he and his cousins would stand at the big picture window in the boathouse and watch the sky on the other side of the lake. They could see the storm make its way across the landscape as the clouds rolled and the water changed colour.

But today there was no distant water to watch, just the sky and trees. Monika speculated that another weather front was probably moving in. Jim wanted it to clear. He had plans. After days of high temperatures and humidity, he had hoped for a break in the weather so he could finish building his fence. It had been too hot to work and now, with Monika on hand to assist, they had both planned to get the job done sooner rather than later. After helping Jim, Monika was looking forward to him helping her transplant three rose bushes.

But the rain continued without any change in the heat. Jim made another coffee for the two of them and they sat in the den watching the continuing storm through the screen door.

Monika's strongest memory of heavy rainfalls came from a weekend at Girl Guides' camp as a youngster. It had poured the entire two days, really poured. An elaborate scavenger hunt had been planned and rain or not, it still happened. All the girls were soaked right through and now, looking back, Monika couldn't remember how or even if, they managed to get dry.

Jim said as soon as a heavy rain started at the cottage, his mum would place several small pots in various places to catch the water dripping down through the old shingled roof. When the rain ceased, the pots were put away having never reached full capacity. Then he and his cousins would don their bathing suits and run outside. Heading for the lake, they jumped in to enjoy a warmer water temperature after the rainfall.

Monika recalled her mother being happy when it rained because as soon as it stopped, she'd head outside to weed her garden. The weeds were much easier to pull when the ground was damp.

As they sat and talked, the rain gradually lessened and then stopped. But the sky still looked troubled so there was no guarantee the storm was finished.

When it looked as though the worst was over, Jim was determined to continue with his fence building. But first they decided to check around outside to see if any damage had been done by the sudden downpour. The air was still very warm and humid, feeling like a damp blanket on their skin.

At the end of Jim's driveway, he saw that the sudden strong surge of water had deepened the dip in the ground at the driveway's end. He'll have to fill it back in and maybe even add some rocks to divert the water next time. Extreme weather had consequences big and small.

After Jim's fence building, Monika could hardly wait to get her rose bushes back into the ground to take advantage of the moist soil. As they walked down the road to her place, they saw tree branches on the ground. And then they saw the bird's nest, a casualty of the storm. Five little heads with open mouths met their eyes.

Immediately it was clear the rose bushes would have to wait. They were now dealing with a matter of life or death.

# points of view

## Fighter jets

steve galea

**Loon Tales**

WHEN I was a kid, I remember my dad using hand signals when he made turns in his car. He'd use an extended arm out the driver's window to indicate a left turn. He'd bend that same arm at the elbow upwards for a right-hand turn. Occasionally, he'd use a third hand signal, if another driver annoyed him. That was the signal I was never supposed to tell my mom about.

He kept relying on those signals because, even though cars back then had turn signals, you could never be too sure that a bulb hadn't burned out.

All this is to say that my father was slow to trust technology.

I also recall the first time he bought a car with power windows, electric locks, and LED displays on the clock and radio. Every time he sat down in the driver's seat, he grumbled and said it was like being in the cockpit of a fighter jet.

I guess I am my father's son, because I finally upgraded my vehicle yesterday, and I kind of felt the same way.

I'm not saying I haven't kept up with the technology in newer cars, but I will say they had to show me how to use the push button start. Also, this vehicle is the first one I've owned that has a TV screen (it actually has two) – though I still can't figure out how to get Netflix.

It also has a back up and forward-facing camera. This is useful, I'm guessing, if you want to see before and after pictures of the racoon that ran out in the middle of the road.

The car's technology also connects to my phone, and lets me use my apps, and text and even provides me with Google map instructions. Which means I'm now going to have to learn how to use all those things too.

When I got the car, the salesman patiently provided me with a remedial course in using all these high-tech features. And, despite him explaining it all exceptionally well, five minutes after I left the lot, I tried to call Jenn using the cup holder.

The drive home could have been a commercial for distracted driving. But luckily, I just remembered that it was still a car, and all the fundamentals of driving remained the same. Those being, the car that is in front of you is going too slow. The driver in the car that passes you is a maniac. And the guy turning could have tried signally a lot earlier.

Still, I couldn't help but be in awe with what this car could do. It ensured I stayed between the lines, remained a safe distance behind the slowpoke ahead of me, and warned me when there was a car in my blind spot. Basically it has rendered the backseat driver redundant.

Even so, by the time I got home I had some misgivings about all this technology. But Jenn tried to reassure me.

"It's actually really good," she said, referring to one of the features. "It will make sure your car always stays between the lines on the road."

"Sure," I countered. What else was I going to say?

But, mark my words, the minute some kids draw a chalk maze on a side street, there's going to be a horrible traffic jam.

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## pic *of the* past

Winning the Rotary Car Draw has been a dream of many in the Highlands for decades. Merv Elstone won back in 1953. From left, Roy Brohm, reeve; Hugh Burk, Rotary Club president; Merv Elstone; and Bill Lane, who sold him the winning ticket. Tickets for this year's Haliburton Rotary Annual Car Draw 2024 Chevrolet Colorado Trail Boss can be purchased online at haliburtonrotary.ca.

A plane takes off from the Stanhope Municipal Airport during the Fly-In last year. /FILE

## Stanhope Airport and Community Summer Fly-In

Grab your hat, sunglasses and sunscreen and head to Stanhope on Saturday, aSummer Fly-In.

Supported by the Stanhope Municipal Airport Advisory Committee, this fun-filled summer favourite will feature a wide array of classic, experimental and unique aircraft; a great variety of food including stone-fired pizza, chicken, Thai food, hamburgers and hotdogs; model aircraft; firefighting equipment and much more.

There will be local vendors and artisans on site, and an auto extrication demonstration by Algonquin Highlands Fire Services is scheduled to take place at 1 p.m. Airplane and helicopter rides will be available for a fee for those who wish to see the Haliburton Highlands from above.

The Stanhope Municipal Airport is located at 1168 Stanhope Airport Road.

*Submitted*

# Class of 2024

Jazzalynne West gave some words of thanks for the support she received by the Haliburton Adult and Alternative Education School at the 2024 graduation ceremony at McKeck's in Haliburton. /THOMAS SMITH Staff

Tess Husbands reads the valedictorian speech written by Dana Black. Valedictorian Dana Black was unfortunately not able to attend the ceremony.

Congratulations to the class of 2024 graduates of the Haliburton Adult and Alternative Education Centre.


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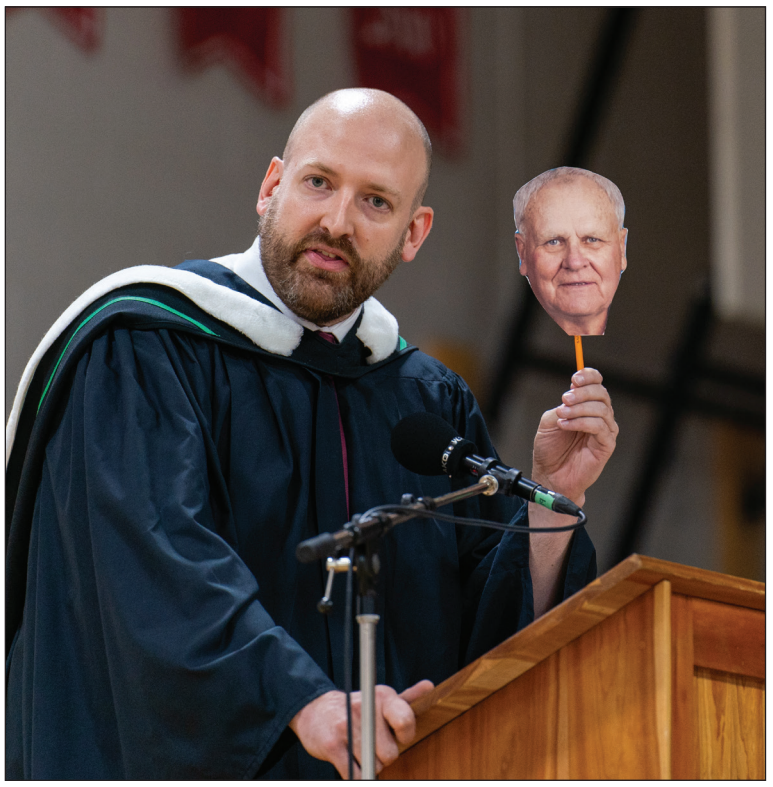
# Class of 2024

Haliburton Highlands Secondary School Grade 12 graduates are bagpiped in to their seats at the start of the ceremony on Thursday, June 27 . /TIM YANO Special to the *Echo*



Vice principal Martin Gage holds up a photo of school board trustee Gary Brohman while he was away.

Brody Bolger accepts his diploma and honours society award during the ceremony.

Valedictorian Abi Lewis chats with principal Jennifer Mills on stage.

Mim Buwalda stops on stage for a photo with her diploma and honours society award.

Annika Gervais received both the Athlete of the Year award, along with Luke Gruppe, and the Award of Outstanding Distinction, along with Matt Scheffee.
The Athlete of the Year Award was given to students who participated in the most athletic extracurricular activities and exhibited leadership, commitment, respect, and sportsmanship.
The Award of Outstanding Distinction is the highest honour at JDH given to students who are well-rounded in all areas of school life.

Luke Gruppe delivers the valedictorian address to his classmates during the JD Hodgson Elementary School Grade 8 graduation ceremony in the gym on Tuesday, June 25. /VIVIAN COLLINGS Staff

Julia Jennings receives one of the Level Up Awards from JDHES teacher Lisa Phillips. The Level Up Awards were awarded to the students who demonstrated notable growth academically or individually over the past year.

Ethan DeCarlo receives one of the Level Up Awards from JDHES teacher Mike van den Hengel.

Vice principal Teressa Bird awards Matt Scheffee with the Principal's Award for Student Leadership for demonstrating outstanding leadership in his class and school community.

Autumn Robins and Calla Jones received the Canadian Parents for French Award from teacher Ceri Bruce.

Principal Gord Wood as he welcomes everyone at the Wilberforce Elementary School grade 8 graduation ceremony at the Lloyd Watson Centre in Wilberforce on June 22. / MICHAEL RILEY Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

# Graduating class celebrates in Wilberforce

MICHALE RILEY

*Local Journalism Initiative Reporter*

Wilberforce Elementary School's Grade 8 graduating class celebrated their graduation on June 26 at noon at the Lloyd Watson Centre in Wilberforce. In addition to the students, teachers, staff and community members, Highlands East Mayor Dave Burton and Haliburton County school trustee Gary Brohman (who was unable to attend but sent a congratulatory message) were on hand to help the kids bid farewell to the elementary school chapter of their lives and embrace their forthcoming high school careers coming this fall.

Jacob Findeis, who teaches grades 7 and 8 at WES told The Haliburton Echo on June 26 that he was so proud of the students for all their dedication and growth throughout their years at Wilberforce Elementary School.

"I am sure they will have a great time in high school and I know they all have bright futures ahead. They have all worked so hard to get to this point and they deserve to celebrate these successes," he says.

The Lloyd Watson Centre was filled with jubilant students, their families, teachers and staff at noon on June 26. Last year, Findeis told The Haliburton Echo that they always do the graduation at the Lloyd Watson Centre, as it's a large space and they don't have a gymnasium at the school.

Principal Gord Wood welcomed everyone to the event and they began with the Land Acknowledgement read by graduate Elaina Boerman and the singing of "O, Canada." Wood then read a message from Brohman, who was unable to be there, but told the graduates that "success in high school follows three rules; go to class, go to class and go to class." Burton told the graduates that as they go on to embark on the next chapter of their lives, to "remember, no dream is too small to achieve, and no goal is too high to reach."

Wood, the teachers and staff then began giving out the awards for grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 as well as the bursaries given out by Burton and the Taylor Donaldson Leadership Award presented by Ms. Laura Fideau to Marley Ann Marie Williams-Clarry. Then the grade 8 graduates came up to receive their diplomas. Then, the two valedictorians, Mia Alden and Andra Brad, gave their remarks on this special occasion. Wood then thanked the school council and gave his closing remarks. Following this, the attendees got to enjoy a slideshow showcasing the graduates and how far they've come while students at WES. The graduates this year are; Mia Sharon Diane Alden, Elaina Shaelynn Boermans, Andra Lori Brad, Mila Annabel Brown, Nevach Kathleen-May Landry, Joshua John Roger Lowe, Brody Tyer William McDonald, Emersyn Cooper McDonald, Daniel Cameron McKenzie, Mya Plumley, Eric Robert Traviss Downey, Marley Ann Marie Williams-Clarry, and Brayden Blake Wilson.

Wood told the graduates that he was in awe of them and in their special way, had made WES an amazing school.

"I know you'll take all of your skills and apply them at high school and be the best you can be," he says.

Wood left them with five important lessons; don't assume adults have all the answers as they don't, there are no shortcuts to excellence, learn from others' mistakes as you don't have to make them all yourself, make yourself happy and put down the phone and be present.

"This is truly a special passage for all of you. You're all future leaders. Congratulations!" he says.

Pat Brown's granddaughter Wila Annabel Brown was one of the grade 8 graduates.

"She was the first one up. I'm very proud of her. She had big spike heels on, that's a little cautious. These kids grow up so fast," she says with a laugh.

After the ceremony, students, their families, staff, and all attendees enjoyed the food and drink, took some photos and videos, relaxed and enjoyed a lot of friendly banter between themselves.

Findeis told the *Haliburton Echo* that he thought the ceremony went great.

"The few little changes we made were great. The slideshow, the speakers were working better, the air conditioning was on, [local baker] Sydney's cupcakes were a nice touch. She also helps with the snack program sometimes so she's hooked up with the school. I thought that went really well. They all worked very hard," he says. "Everybody got their moment in the spotlight."

Highlands East Mayor Dave Burton offering congratulations and advice to the graduates.

Joshua John Roger Lowe received his diploma from teacher Jacob Findeis while Principal Gord Wood looks on.

Tracey Nottage, Wilberforce Elementary School educational assistant, handling the AV duties.

Pat Brown with her graduate granddaughter Wila Annabel Brown.

Jasmine, Amanda McKenzie, graduate Daniel Cameron McKenzie, Kodi and Gilles Lecours.

# Haliburton County youth invade Muskoka

THOMAS SMITH

*Staff Reporter*

Haliburton County is taking over the Muskoka Hornets! Five players for the Muskoka Hornets Tier 2 14UAA team are from our Highlands. Leighton Nesbitt, Ross Gordon, Van Ryan, Carter Shaw, and Vanek Logan are part of the 12 person 14UAA baseball team. The player's ages range from 13 to 14. There are no baseball teams in Haliburton County for their level of play in their age category. The Muskoka Hornets Baseball Association formed in 2009 for kids in the Muskoka region (and beyond) to play competitive baseball. Youth must try out to be a part of the 14UAA baseball team.

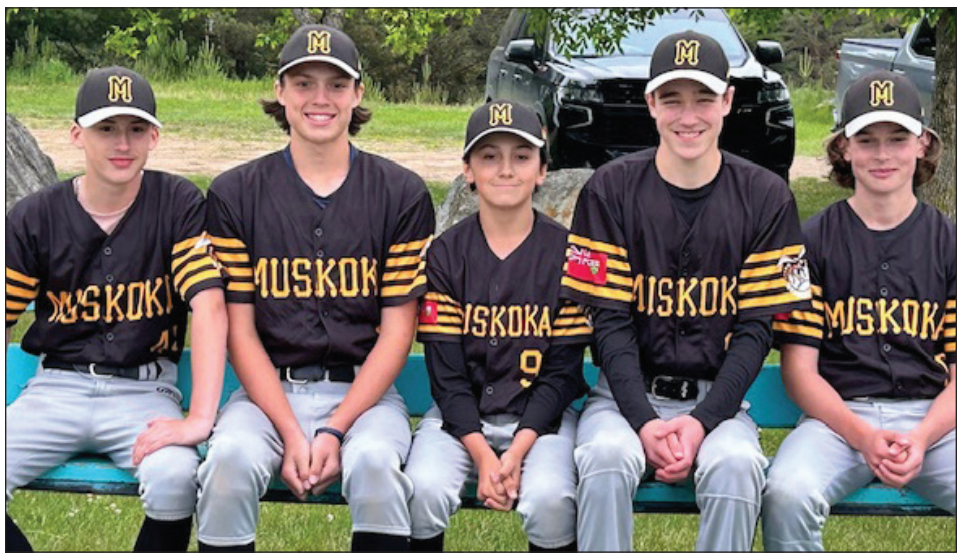
Most of the youth have been playing baseball since they were around four years old. All of the players from Haliburton County are pitchers, but Head Coach Brad Bissell makes the players play different positions to get stronger.

"Most of them have been playing for ten years in Minden," said Amy Shaw.

"I've been playing my whole life," said Leighton Nesbitt.

"It's just a fun sport and I enjoy playing it," said Carter Shaw. "I wish I could play it every day."

"The players are pretty nice, like the team," said Van Ryan.



From left, Leighton Nesbitt (#44), Vanek Logan (#4), Carter Shaw (#93), Ross Gordon (#98), and Van Ryan (#9) are all members of the Muskoka Hornets Baseball Association 14UAA team. /Submitted

"It's fun hanging out with friends and playing tournaments and stuff," said Shaw.

All the young players have enjoyed being on a team with others from the Muskoka area.

"We don't get to see them often, so it's good to see them at baseball," said Shaw.

Some of the heroes the young players look up to include Elly de la Cruz, Jackie Robinson, Babe Ruth, Hank Aaron, Mickey Mantle, and Darryl Strawberry.

"I want to play until I'm aged out at 18," said Shaw. "I want to try to get a baseball scholarship like my brother did."

"Until the end of high school," said Van Ryan.

What do our hornets want to know about the team?

"We are a strong team," said Ryan.

"We're the heroes from Haliburton," said Shaw with a laugh.

Vanek Logan has only been playing with the Hornets recently, but says that he feels like he has been welcomed with open arms.

The Muskoka Hornets 14U AA team are currently placed fourth in their league with a record of 4-4 this season.

"That's only because the team ahead of us has played more games," said Shaw.

The young players consider Newmarket and Barrie their biggest adversaries.

The team's big dream this year is to win YSBA, the biggest tournament in the York Simcoe Baseball Association.

"They are the only AA team for the hornets this year," said Andy Gordon. "All the other teams are A."

"It's really great that these guys are out representing Minden and Haliburton," said Andy Gordon. "We have 12 guys on the team, these guys are certainly just as good as the other seven. There is a lot of camaraderie here."

The staff that supports the Muskoka Hornets 14UAA team include Brad Bissel as the head coach, Trevor Bowers as assistant coach, Peter Haynes as assistant coach, Josh Shaw as assistant coach, Jeff Ryan as the trainer and Dessi as the bat boy.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Past President Aaron Hill congratulates Ted Brandon for winning the Rotarian of the year award which is named after Fred Jones, a former president of the club.

## Turning the page

Below, the Rotary Club of Haliburton celebrated another successful year at its annual Year end meeting at the Bonnie View this past Thursday evening. Past President Aaron Hill congratulates incoming President Sue Collings. /DAVID ZILSTRA Staff

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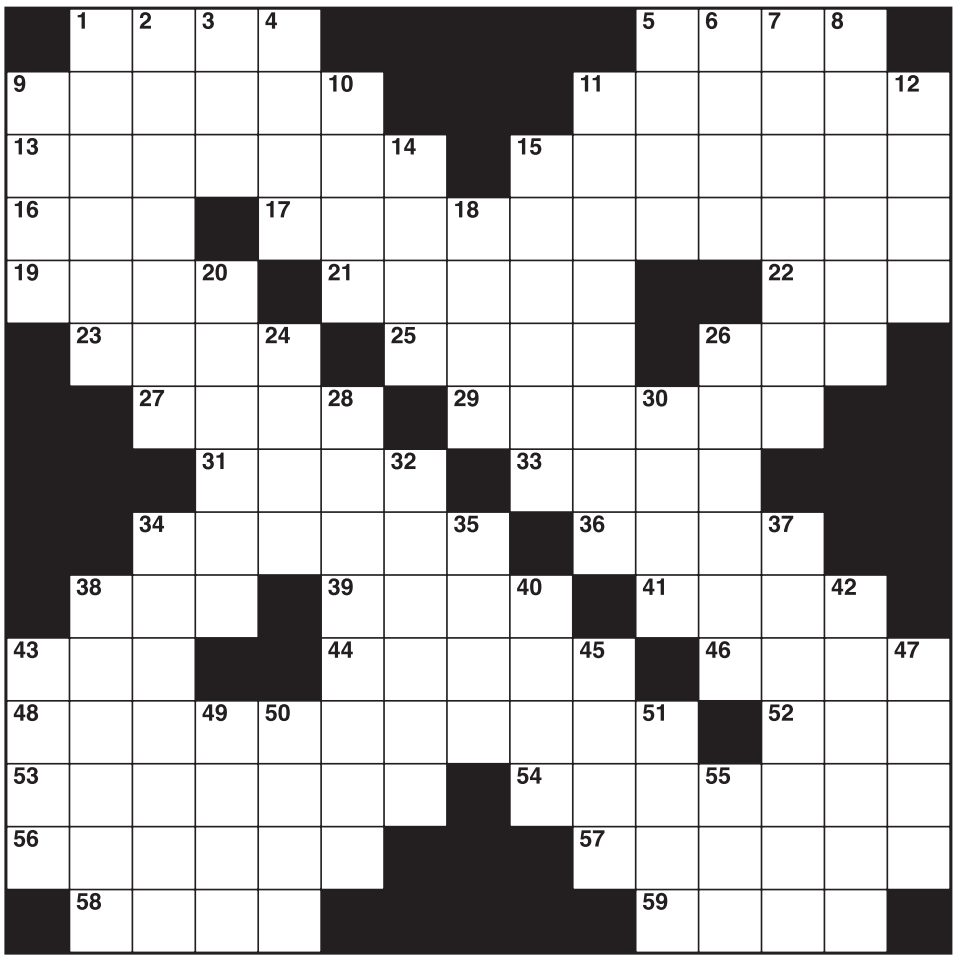


CLUES ACROSS
1. Six (Spanish)
5. Invests in little enterprises
9. Large dung beetle
11. Gored
13. Partially paralyzed
15. Still a little wet
16. Legal field media company
17. Not working
19. 500 sheets of paper
21. Church structure
22. Sheep disease
23. Small drink of whiskey
25. Weaving tradition
26. Pestilence
27. Body part
29. Nabs
31. Places to stay
33. Witnesses
34. Looked for
36. Arranges
38. Political action committee
39. Middle eastern nation (alt. sp.)
41. Hair-like structure
43. Parts producer
44. Greek city
46. Subway dwellers
48. Norm from "Cheers"
52. Clean a floor
53. Vied for
54. Canned fish
56. Inspire with love
57. Sent down moisture
58. Wrest
59. Partner to carrots

CLUES DOWN
1. Mounted
2. Assign
3. Wrath
4. Self-immolation by fire ritual
5. Parts of an organism
6. Person from England
7. Tropical plants of the pea family
8. Body part
9. Practice boxing
10. Containers
11. Contrary beliefs
12. Bleached
14. Pre-Islamic Egyptian
15. A group of similar things ordered one after another
18. Innermost spinal cord membranes
20. Cassava
24. A restaurant's list of offerings
26. Annoy constantly
28. Orchestrate
30. Z Z Z
32. Astute
34. Highly decorated tea urn
35. Teach to behave
37. Endurance
38. Urinating
40. Barbie friend dolls
42. Repents
43. Man-eating giant
45. Jewish calendar month
47. Accelerated
49. Husband of Sita in Hindu
50. Lump of semiliquid substance
51. Lying in wait
55. Cease to exist

*Answers on page 16*

# Folk Society announces 2024-25 concert line-up

The Haliburton County Folk Society is pleased to announce the artists they will present in their 2024-25 Concert Series. A limited number of series passes will be sold for the five shows, providing great value to see some amazing live music in the Haliburton Highlands!

"This is the first time in five years we have programmed a full series, and we are really excited about our line up, which includes Juno and Canadian Folk Music Award winners and Polaris Music Prize and Maple Blues Award nominees", says Artistic Director Sue Shikaze. "We pride ourselves in bringing top Canadian talent to the Haliburton Highlands. I think people know that Folk Society shows are a great night of live music, representing a broad range of genres."

The series opens on September 14, with Garnetta Cromwell and DaGroovmasters, a classic, soulful blues band that delivers a high-energy show sure to bring joy to all. They have performed at festivals across Canada, and were nominated for a 2023 Maple Blues Award for New Artist/Group.

Bilingual singer, songwriter and fiddle player Aleksi Campagne brings his trio to the stage on October 18. Recently named Penguin Eggs and Roots Music Canada's New Discovery of the Year, Aleksi wows audiences with his unique combination of voice, violin and looping-effect pedals. He received a Canadian Folk Music Award in 2024 for French Songwriter of the Year.

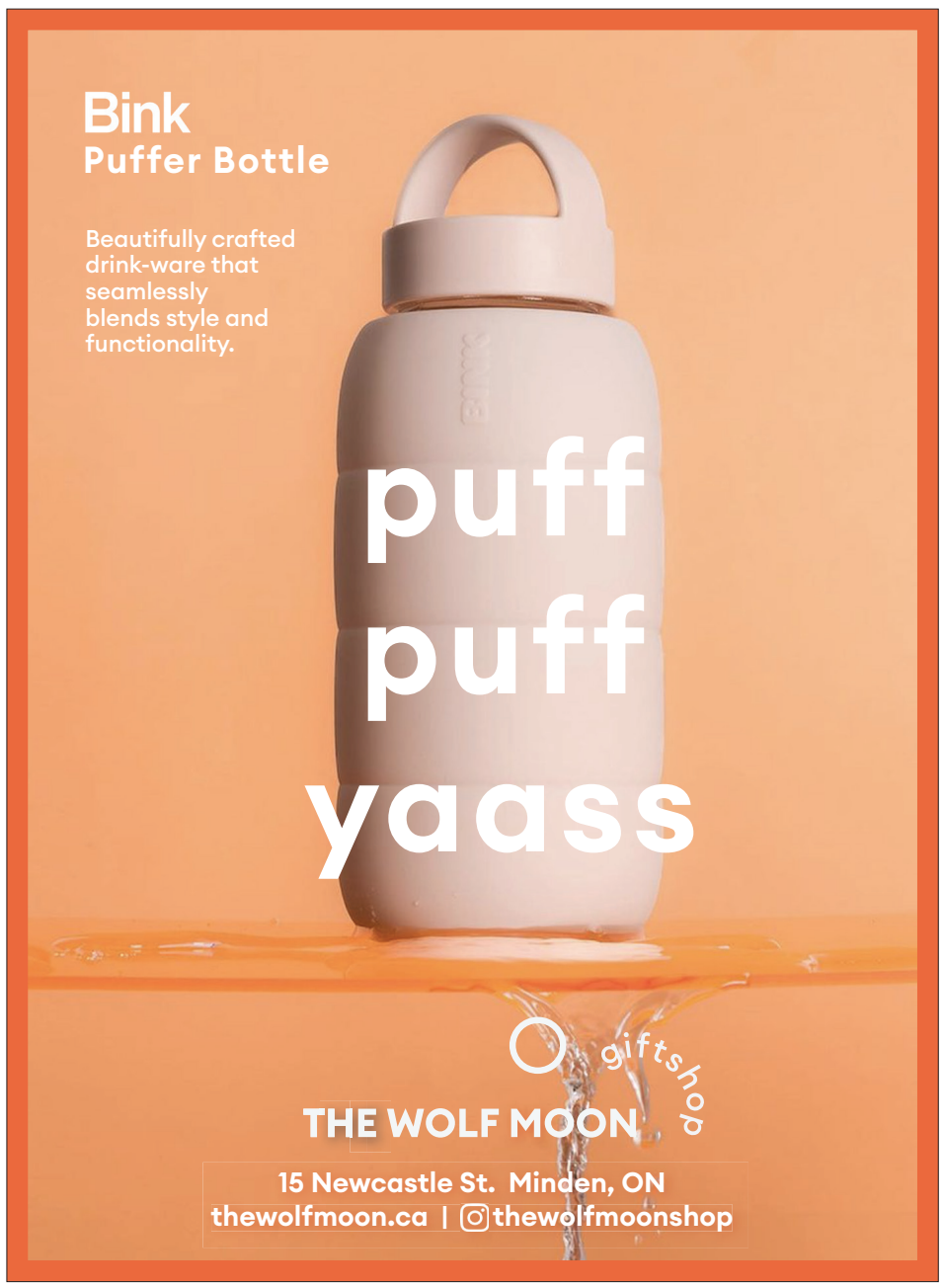
On February 1, 2025, hometown favourite Terra Lightfoot returns with her talented trio. Their energy and charisma onstage together creates musical magic, led by Terra's wonderful voice and monster guitar playing. Her latest album Healing Power was recently long-listed for the prestigious 2024 Polaris Music Prize.

Soul-folk singer from Northern Alberta Celeigh Cardinal will take the stage with her band on April 19, 2025. With a confident voice, Celeigh owns a stage and captivates audiences, blending humour and vulnerability in her performances. Her songwriting has been described as both impactful and sublime and won her a 2020 Juno Award for Indigenous Artist or Group of the Year.

The series wraps up with Barbra Lica and her band on May 31, 2025. Barbra is a JUNO-nominated vocalist and singer-songwriter whose music seamlessly blends jazz, country and folk influences. Described as sunny, upbeat and refreshing, this show will be a great welcome to spring.

A concert series pass can save you up to 25 per cent over buying individual tickets for each show. There's a limited number of passes available, so get yours today! www.haliburtonfolk.com. Don't miss this opportunity to see these acclaimed artists right here in the Haliburton Highlands!

*Submitted by the Haliburton County Folk Society*



## Fun with friends

Members of the Haliburton Highlands Paddlers and the Friendship Force came together on Friday, June 14 on Kasahagawigamog Lake behind HCDC's office to go for a paddle in a dragon boat. The Haliburton Highlands Paddlers are part of the Haliburton County Community Co-operative and are a group of individuals with a love for being on the water. The Friendship Force is part of a large group of worldwide travel enthusiasts and aims to bring people together in friendship between different countries and cultures. Members of the Friendship Force from the Isle of Wight, England participated during a Highlands visit. /VIVIAN COLLINGS Staff

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**CUPE 4416**

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- We thank all applicants who apply, however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted
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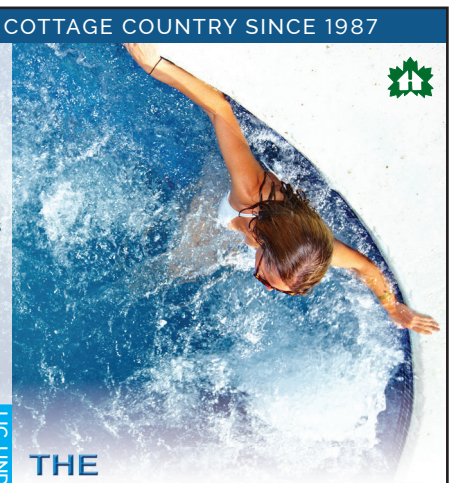

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## INSIDE THE ECHO

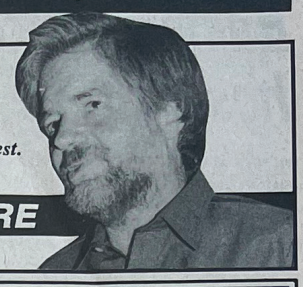
This week's circulation· 5,575


**A Bitter Blow**
*Local people are being given short shrift by the Ontario government.*
**EDITORIAL**
See page 6

**Changes**
*For Gary and Judy Chapman retirement is exciting.*
**THE ARTS**
See County Life

**Spunky**
*Camp Awakening lets 7 girls set high goals.*
**PEOPLE**
See page 9

NATURE
*...and how to preserve it at Haliburton Forest.*
**FEATURE**
See page 16





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# THE HALIBURTON COUNTY ECHO
AND MINDEN RECORDER

Vol. 107 No. 36 Wednesday, July 12, 1989 'The voice of the Highlands' 54 pages 50 cents


# Resort sewer line denied provincial funds

by LEN PIZZEY
Editor

Hopes that Haliburton's resort sewer line could go to tender this fall have been dashed. Ontario's environment ministry has told Dysart et al council that construction of the line will not be funded this year.

The announcement was a bitter disappointment to Dysart et al council, as well as to the Lake Kashagawigamog resorts the sewer extension is designed to serve. It means council must reapply to the MOE for funding next year, with no guarantee that it will be approved.

In the meantime, costs continue to escalate. The MOE estimates the current cost of constructing the sewage forced main and expanding the Haliburton sewage treatment at $7.6-million, almost four times the project's estimated cost when first approved in 1985.

While no construction funds are available, the MOE has said it will continue to fund pre-engineering work on the project, including the cost of an environmental study of the sewage plant expansion completed by consultants Totten Sims Hubicki last December. That study remains in the hands of the MOE, and will not be made public until it has been reviewed, a process that has already taken several months longer than anticipated.

When the study is released, the public will have an opportunity to comment on it. It will then be reviewed once again by the MOE, pending final approval by the Ontario cabinet.

"We have no idea how long this is going to take" reeve Murray Fearrey said. "It's just one bungle after another"

The fear shared by council and the resort owners is that the project may never be funded, or that rising costs will make it impossible for the owners to finance their 25 percent share of construction. If that happens, Fearrey says the pollution problem that has prompted many people on Lake Kashagawigamog to voice their concerns, almost certainly will grow worse. Expansion plans of the resorts also will be curtailed, affecting long-term prospects for the local economy.

Dysart intends to press ahead with plans to formally establish a funding structure to meet ongoing operating costs of the line, should it ever be built. These would include a combination of frontage charges, connection charges and a equivalent residential unit fees. Resort owners would have the option of paying the fees up front, or of amortizing them over a long period of time.

The fact that the project has been approved for four years, and that a substantial amount of money already has been spent for engineering drawings and environmental assessment studies, does not, in the current climate of government priorities, appear to carry much weight.

"There is no guarantee that it's going to come on next year" Fearrey said.

In the meantime, council and the resort owners will use all the political clout they can muster to press the government to live up to the funding committment that was first made in 1985.

## Truck barred from dump

by ANNE HEWITT
Staff Reporter

A large, unmarked truck was turned away from the Hall's Lake dump in Stanhope last week.

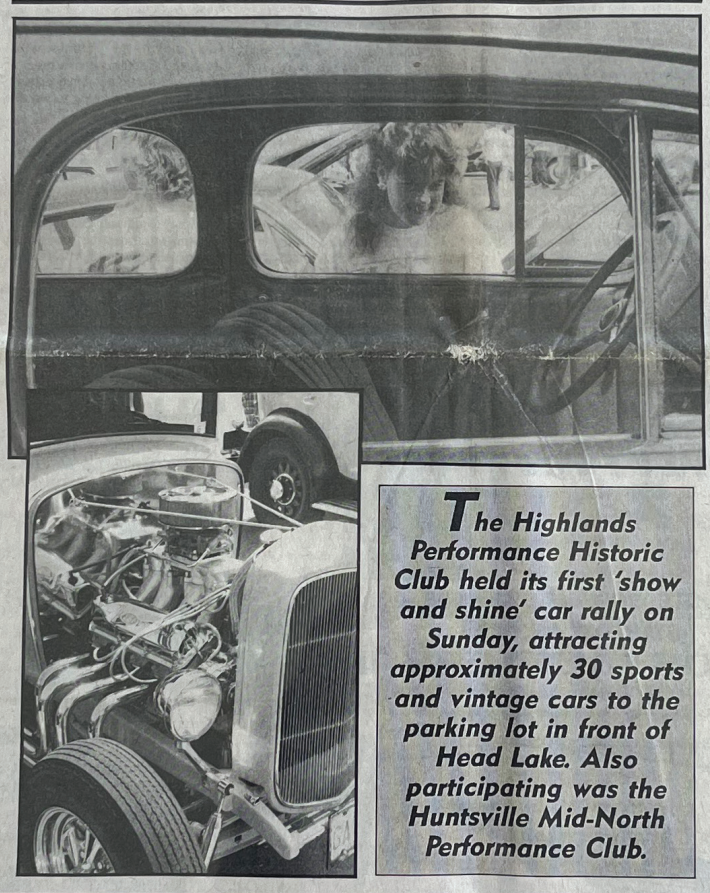
Although it is not known for sure what the truck was carrying, when landfill site attendant Carl Harrison approached the driver he was told the truck contained only water.

"I told him he couldn't dump it here," says Harrison. "We didn't need it. I don't know what it was carrying, but it passed through my head that it wasn't water."

Stanhope Reeve Harry Davis says that although he didn't know anything about the incident, it would not surprise him if trucks from other areas were unloading in local dumps. He says it has been a problem in the past.

"We have had cases where people have come in the middle of the night," he says. "We even had 20 steel encased containers of toxic waste left at the Maple Lake dump a couple of years ago."

By having an attendant at the land fill sites, as well as fences and gates, Davis is hoping unwanted people will be kept out. He says the dumps in this area do not have the capacity for any large-scale dumping.



**The Highlands Performance Historic Club held its first 'show and shine' car rally on Sunday, attracting approximately 30 sports and vintage cars to the parking lot in front of Head Lake. Also participating was the Huntsville Mid-North Performance Club.**

## HHSS teachers receive a 5% salary increase

by SUSAN GROBER
Staff Reporter

The Haliburton County Board of Education has ratified a 5.15 per cent salary increase for teaching staff in a two-year collective agreement with members of the local Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation.

For the first year of the settlement, salaries will range from $26,711 to $32,008 for staff with no previous experience and $45,715 to $56,000 for staff with 11 years experience. In May 1990 an inflation increase (under National Consumer Price Index) plus a one per cent increase is to be set for the second year.

Most benefits haven't significantly changed, but vision care and dental plan packages are now available. In the second year of the agreement, a Blue Cross vision care package will begin, with the board paying 60 per cent of the premium. The package includes $200 for eyeglasses every 24 months.

The Blue Cross dental plan will be effective in the first year of the contract, with the board paying 50 per cent of the premium. In the second year of the contract, the board will pay 75 per cent of the cost. Coverage includes most dental work.

Under the subject of leave of absence, paternity leave has been in-

Please turn to page 3

## Province should increase education spending; tax income, not property

by ANNE HEWITT
Staff Reporter

The Haliburton Board of Education and the Federation of Ontario Cottager's Associations (FOCA) are in the same boat when it comes to property taxes, says Wendy Ladurantaye, chairman of the board.

"As a local trustee I am frustrated by the way the government is bouncing us around," she says to a group of cottagers at the Mountain Lake Cottagers' Association meeting on Saturday. "They think this is a very rich area, and when you look outside it is. But it isn't in other ways. The average family income in Haliburton County is $27,000, and the poor are being hit hard by property tax as well.

"We're all on the same issue, on the same side, saying the same thing."

More than 60 per cent of property tax is an education levy, which cottagers must pay even though they do not have children in the local school system.

This year the education levy was particularly high, due to a decline in provincial support for local school boards. The boards are required to implement a variety of costly programs, but are not receiving any additional funding.

"The Board sets the budget, but a provincial mandate tells us what we have to set most of the time," says Ladurantaye. "We know we're accountable to the people who elect us, but we are given a program with no funding. We are no longer the voice of the people. We can't represent you the way we want to.

"We have to have a 40-minute uninterrupted lunch for teachers, so the school day has to be lengthened or we have to hire extra people. Special education has become part of the regular school system, and the pupil/teacher ratio has to be maintained. None of these things are bad, but they cost money. And they've been packed on us so quickly over the last few years that taxes have had to increase just to provide services."

Enrollment in Haliburton County is up, and new schools need to be built, however the province has turned down a request for capital funding. With a six per cent increase in enrollment, the general grants for the county increased .007 per cent. In other parts of Ontario funding was increased. (One board had a 1.87 per cent drop in enrollment and a 1.5 per cent increase in grants.)

"It used to be that Ontario was a poor province and the one-room school was the best structure in the community," says Ladurantaye. "Now we are a rich province with portables that don't last. How can this be? With portables you have nothing to show for your tax dollars. Buildings will last."

However, most of the tax dollar is being well spent, says Ladurantaye. Sixty-five per cent is spent on

Please turn to page 3

**Wilberforce Wintario**

The television cameras came to Wilberforce last Thursday night when the weekly Wintario draw was held at the Monmouth Arena. The Coghlans of Harcourt provided the entertainment before the show and the audience saw a video about what the draw's proceeds are donated to. Here, Reeve Keith Tallman receives a plaque from co-host Greg Beresford, who dressed in cottage country casuals especially for this show.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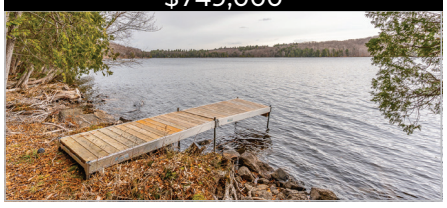

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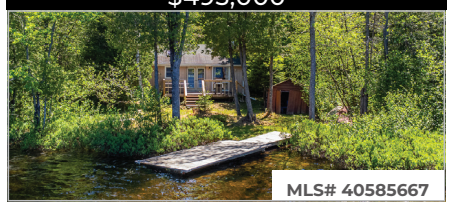

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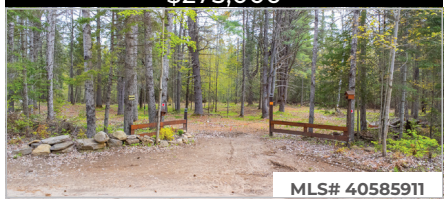
HALIBURTON LAKE ROAD
$275,000



MLS# 40585911

BRENHOLM LANE
$249,900

MLS# 40586352

BETHEL ROAD
$195,000

MLS# 40476956

LAKEVIEW ST.
$159,900

MLS# 40538935

GRACE RIVER ROAD
$185,000

MLS# 40549856

CHANDLER POINT
$68,500
FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP

MLS# 40578158

ELEPHANT LAKE RD
$48, 925

MLS# 40579751

HALIBURTON LAKE
$775,000

SOLD

MLS# 40595788

BRENHOLM LANE
$175,000

SOLD

MLS# 40603358

KUSHOG LAKE
$1,695,000

SOLD

MLS# 40572073

Linda Baumgartner - Broker of Record | Owner
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